

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USSAGE

CINCPAC

COGARD

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

UNCLAS STATE 063996

COGARD FOR POLAD

TAGS:PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT:MARCH 29 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. PRES.DESIGNATES MARCH 29 AS VIETNAM VETS' DAY TO
COINCIDE WITH FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF WITHDRAWAL OF LAST US
TROOPS FROM VN (NYT). SEN. HUGHES SAYS DOD ACKNOWLEDGES
THAT IT CONDUCTS "LARGE-SCALE AERIAL WAR GAMES" OVER
SEA AND CONTINUES "HOSTILE FIRE PAY" TO US TROOPS IN AREA.
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HE TELLS SENATE THAT MISSIONS WITH BOMB-LADEN PLANES
COULD INVOLVE RISK OF RENEWED US COMBAT INVOLVEMENT IN
VN WAR. IN LETTER, DOD SPOKESMAN TELLS HUGHES USAF
TRAINING FLIGHTS IN SEA "DO NOT EMPLOY LARGE NUMBERS"

OF BOMB-LOADED PLANES (AP, PHINQ).

2. MIL SOURCES SAY REBELS SCORE IMPORTANT POLITICAL VICTORY AS OUDONG CONQUEST COMPLETED WITH WITHDRAWAL OF TOWN'S FORMER GARRISON FROM BESIEGED PAGODA (UPI, BALTO N-A 3/28). MIL AND DIPLOMATIC SOURCES REPORT REBELS OCCUPY PAGODA COMPOUND WHERE 600 FANK AND 3000 REFUGEES HAD HELD OUT UNDER HEAVY BOMBARDMENT SINCE MARCH 18, AND CAPTURE HUNDREDS OF CIVILIANS. TROOPS AND REFUGEES FLED IN CONFUSION WHEN AMMO SUPPLY WAS HIT BY REBEL SHELL AND BLEW UP. ABOUT HALF OF GARRISON AND 1000 CIVILIANS REPORTEDLY REACH FANK RELIEF FORCE,

GARRISON COMMANDER MIA. FOLLOWING REBEL ENTRY INTO PAGODA, KAF BOMBS COMPOUND TO DESTROY ABANDONED ARTILLERY AND VEHICLES. LOSS OF PAGODA SEEN AS "SERIOUS SETBACK" TO GKR, NOW FACED, ACCORDING TO WESTERN ANALYSTS, WITH DIFFICULT CHOICE OF WITHDRAWING FROM AREA OR SENDING REINFORCEMENTS TO PREVENT HEAVY EQUIPMENT AND MANPOWER LOSSES (AP NYT, SUN, WP; PHINQ). OUDONG CHIEF MONK SAYS REBELS CART AWAY 5000 LBS. OF ANTIQUE STATUES, BRONZE BOWLS AND SANSKRIT STONES. PP SOURCES SAY IT IS LARGEST ENEMY HAUL OF "PORTABLE" KHMER RELICS AND ANTIQUES SINCE WAR STARTED (AP, CHITRIB).

3. MCCOMBS (WP) QUOTES WESTERN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES THAT NVA FIRST DIV. WAS RECENTLY FORCED OUT OF CAMBODIA AND INTO CHAU DUC AND KIEN GIANG AREA OF SVN DELTA AFTER FIGHTING WITH KHMER COMMUNIST "SUPPOSED" ALLIES. SEVERAL HUNDRED ON EACH SIDE REPORTEDLY WOUNDED IN CLASHES OVER FOOD SUPPLIES AND TERRITORIAL CONTROL. NVA SUPPLY LINES INTO DELTA SERIOUSLY DISRUPTED AND ARVN HAS BEEN ATTACKING THE UNIT. MCCOMBS COMMENTS THAT BAD RELATIONS AND FIGHTING INSIDE CAMBODIA BY VIET AND KHMER COMMUNISTS, PROBABLY BASED ON DEEP-SEATED CULTURAL AND RACIAL ANIMOSITIES, HAVE LONG BEEN REPORTED, BUT RECENT "PLIGHT" OF FIRST DIV. IS FRESH UNCLASSIFIED

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INDICATION OF IMPORTANCE OF KHMER NATIONAL PRIDE ON COURSE OF WAR. BEFORE C-F, FIRST DIV., WITH ABOUT 5000 MEN, WAS PUSHED INTO CAMBODIA BY ARVN; NOW HAS ABOUT 2000 MEN. ANALYSTS THINK OTHER 3000 MAY HAVE BEEN SENT IN SMALL GROUPS TO FLESH-OUT COMMUNIST UNITS IN DELTA. INTELLIGENCE REPORTS INDICATE NVA HAS STEPPED-UP RESUPPLY BY BOAT BECAUSE FIRST DIV. CAN NO LONGER PERFORM ITS SUPPLY MISSION. ANALYSTS SEE CULTURAL AND RACIAL PRIDE, THAT ALSO MAY BE LATENT IN LAOS, AS ONE REASON WHY NVA HAS WORKED SO HARD SINCE C-F TO DEVELOP NEW SUPPLY ROUTES INSIDE SVN. ELEGANT (LAT 3/28) WRITES FROM SAIGON ON SAME SUBJECT, QUOTES "AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES" THAT FIRST DIV. REDUCED TO

"NEAR IMPOTENCE" BY CLASHES WITH KHMER COMMUNISTS AND THAT RESULTING FOOD, AMMO AND HEALTH PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF SUPPLY DISRUPTION "PRESS HARD" ON OTHER COMMUNIST UNITS IN DELTA AND FORCE THEM TO GIVE GROUND TO GVN. ELEGANT ALSO ASCRIBES ROOT OF PROBLEM TO KHMER-VIET TRADITIONAL INTENSE ANTIPATHY, ADDS THAT GKR ALSO HAS LITTLE AFFECTION FOR ITS SVN ALLIES, AND THEIR FORCES "REGULARLY CLASHED" EVEN WHEN ARVN WAS SAVING GKR FROM "IMMEDIATE DESTRUCTION."

4. SVN COMMAND REPORTS THAT OVER 500 NVA AND VC ATTACK CAMP 35 MILES NW OF SAIGON AND HOLD PARTS OF IT FOR OVER 24 HOURS BEFORE DRIVEN OFF BY 300-MAN GARRISON, WITH 84 COMMUNISTS AND 14 ARVN KIA AND VNAF PLANE LOST (AP NYT, BALTO N-A 3/28; CSM; PHINQ).

5. SOUTHERLAND (CSM) FROM SAIGON QUOTES HYATT HOTEL CHAIN OFFICIALS THAT THEY ARE CONSIDERING CONSTRUCTION OF LARGE LUXURY HOTEL DESPITE FIGHTING.

6. ALGERIAN GOVT. ANNOUNCES THAT PHAM VAN DONG WILL VISIT "SOON" AT INVITATION OF BOUMEDIENNE (WP). NVN NEWS AGENCY REPORTS THAT US SR-71 "SPY" PLANE TWICE INTRUDED ON DRV AIRSPACE INCLUDING HANOI AND HAIPHONG AREAS; SAYS MFA "STERNLY CONDEMNED" ACTION TAKEN "IN VIOLATION" OF C-F (REUTER HK).

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7. USSR HANDED PRC AMB. LIU NOTE THURSDAY REJECTING PRC CHARGES THAT SOVIET HELICOPTER, WHICH LANDED IN SINKIANG MAR. 14, WAS ON SPYING MISSION, ACCUSING PEKING OF VIOLATING INTERNATIONAL LAW BY HOLDING CRAFT'S THREE CREWMEN AND DEMANDING ITS IMMEDIATE RETURN (CSM, WP, NYT).

8. REUTER PEKING REPORTS "RELIABLE WITNESSES" SAYING WALL POSTERS IN TAIYUAN, CAPITAL OF SHANSI PROVINCE, ARE CALLING FOR REMOVAL OF HSIEH CHEN-HUA (FIRST PARTY SECRETARY AND PROVINCIAL MILITARY COMMANDER) AND TSAO CHUNG-NAN (PROVINCE'S DEPUTY POLITICAL COMMISAR), IN FIRST OPEN ATTACKS ON PARTY CHIEFS AND OFFICIALS IN CURRENT PRC MASS-CRITICISM CAMPAIGN. POSTERS CALL ON BOTH TO APOLOGIZE AND BOW HEADS TO PEOPLE; BUT NOT CLEAR WHAT THEY ARE ACCUSED OF. SAYS ATTACKS BY NAME ARE FIRM INDICATION THAT ACUTE POLITICAL STRUGGLE BEING CONDUCTED IN TAIYUAN (NYT, WP).

9. IN SECOND OF TWO REPORTS FROM KWANG LI COMMUNE, PEGGY PRINTZ SAYS CONFLICT IS EVIDENT ONCE AGAIN IN RURAL COMMUNES BETWEEN ZEALOUS DOCTRINAIRES AND

PRAGMATISTS WHO HAVE ALLOWED SOME CAPITALIST-TYPE INCENTIVES OF COMPETITION AND REWARDS TO RETURN, AND PEKING SEEMS TO HAVE COME OUT ON SIDE OF RURAL PRAGMATISM "FOR THE MOMENT." SAYS EVEN IN CAMPAIGN CRITICISM AGAINST LIN PIAO AND CONFUCIUS, PEOPLE'S DAILY HAS SAID, IMPORTANT FIGHTING RESPONSIBILITY OF

RURAL AREAS IS TO DO SPRING PLOWING WELL. CONCLUDES THAT CULTURAL REVOLUTION, IN MANY WAYS, HAS TOUCHED PEASANTS POSITIVELY BY ENCOURAGING THEM TO BE PROUD OF THEIR SIMPLE WAY OF LIFE, AND HAS SET IN MOTION "FORCES THAT ULTIMATELY SHOULD BENEFIT THEM"(CSM).

10. BARRY KRAMER (WSJ) REPORTS FDA HAS PROBLEM WITH HOST OF CHINESE "FOLK REMEDIES" ON SALE IN US THAT AMERICANS APPARENTLY ARE BUYING AND USING "IN HOPES OF CURING EVERYTHING FROM LOSS OF HAIR TO INFERTILITY." AGENCY HAS CONFISCATED SEVERAL TONS OF "CURE-ALL" UNCLASSIFIED

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REMEDIES, BUT THIS IS SMALL PORTION OF TOTAL AMOUNT THAT HAS ENTERED US SINCE 1971 RELAXATION OF TRADE BANS WITH PRC. CHINESE CLAIM THAT MANY OF THEIR ANCIENT POTIONS HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO BE EFFICACIOUS BY MODERN SCIENTIFIC TESTS, THEREFORE, "IT MUST HAVE COME AS A SURPRISE" TO PRC WHEN SOME OF ITEMS IN ITS VERY FIRST POST-TRADE-BAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS TO US WERE DETAINED BY FDA INSPECTORS. MOST PRC PATENT MEDICINE EXPORTS ARE SOLD IN SEA, AND US MARKET IS COMPARABLY SMALL, SO CHINESE PHARMACEUTICAL AND FOOD FACTORIES HAVE BEEN GENERALLY UNWILLING TO SUPPLY SEPARATE LABELS THAT WOULD COMPLY WITH FDA REGULATIONS. THEIR GENERAL APPROACH, THEREFORE, HAS BEEN TO MAKE CLAIMS AND TAKE CHANCE THAT OVERBURDENED FDA INSPECTORS WON'T NOTICE. FDA CAN ONLY HOPE US GENERAL PUBLIC WILL EXERCISE CERTAIN AMOUNT OF JUDGMENT IN PURCHASING SUCH NON-PRESCRIPTION "REMEDIES."

11. IN FIRST PEKING TRADE EXHIBITION SINCE PRC PRESS BEGAN CRITICIZING OVER-RELIANCE ON FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY -- SPARKING FEARS CHINA WAS ABOUT TO REVERSE ITS OUTGOING TRADE POLICY OF RECENT YEARS -- AUSTRIA'S INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION OPENED FRIDAY WITH ABOUT 80 COMPANIES TAKING PART REUTER (PEKING) REPORTS. PRC OFFICIALS HAVE STRESSED THERE WILL BE NO TURNABOUT ON FOREIGN TRADE, AND FACT THAT PREPARATIONS FOR NEARLY 10 MORE PEKING TRADE EXHIBITIONS THIS YEAR ARE GOING AHEAD SEEMS TO BACK CHINESE POINT. "ONE JARRING NOTE" IN AUSTRIA EXHIBITION WAS DISPLAY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AND RECORDS OF MUSIC BY MOZART AND BEETHOVEN.

12. NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR US-CHINA TRADE, NATIONAL

COMMITTEE ON US-CHINA RELATIONS AND WORLD TRADE INSTITUTE
SPONSORING SPECIAL CONFERENCE OF GOVT. OFFICIALS AND
BUSINESS EXECUTIVES AT WORLD TRADE INSTITUTE (APR. 2)

ON WAYS AND MEANS OF DOING BUSINESS WITH PRC. SPECIAL
FEATURE WILL BE EXHIBIT OF REPRESENTATIVE PRC PRODUCTS;
SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE CHAS. W. YOST; CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS;
CHAS. FREEMAN (DOS PRC DESK OFFICER); RAND CORP.'S WM.
WHITSON; PRC-TRADE ANALYST RBT. DERNBERGER; THOMAS
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FARUGIA, PEKING IMPORT & MANUFACTURERS, INC. PRES.;
THOMAS GREENISH, WESTERN UNION INTERNATIONAL VICE.
PRES; WM. CLARK, COMMERCE DEPT.'S PRC AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR; AND WM. RANDOLPH, FDA COMMISSIONER (JOC).

JAPAN

13. JOC'S CULLISON, IN TOKYO, REPORTS THAT UAW'S INTER-
NATIONAL DIVISION DIRECTOR HERMAN REBUHAN IS SCHEDULED
TO ARRIVE IN JAPAN FOR SERIES OF TALKS WITH TOP JAPANESE
AUTO INDUSTRY AND LABOR OFFICIALS, TO EXPLAIN UAW'S
PROPOSAL THAT US IMPOSE HIGHER TARIFFS AND IMPORT
QUOTAS ON FOREIGN CARS ENTERING US MARKET. EXPECTED
HE WILL SEEK INFO WHETHER JAPANESE AUTO INDUSTRY IS
PREPARED TO RESTRICT AUTO EXPORTS TO US ON VOLUNTARY
BASIS.

14. TSUGIO KUSAMIJA, DIRECTOR OF MID-AMERICAN JAPAN TRADE
CENTER IN CHICAGO, NAMED TO LEWIS UNIVERSITY BOARD OF
TRUSTEES -- REPORTEDLY FIRST TIME JAPANESE CITIZEN AND
GOVT. OFFICIAL HAS BEEN NAMED TO BOARD OF US
UNIVERSITY (CHITRIB).

KOREA

15. EIGHT MORE (CHRISTIANS) SENTENCED TO THREE TO
FIFTEEN YEAR PRISON TERMS BY MIL COURTS FOR DEFYING
PARK'S BAN ON CRITICIZING CONSTITUTION, BRINGING TOTAL
SENTENCED TO 34. SIX STUDENTS AT US-SPONSORED JESUIT
COLLEGE IN SEOUL ARRESTED AFTER DEMONSTRATING FOR FREE-
DOM OF SPEECH AND PEACEFUL REVISION OF CONSTITUTION)WP).

THAILAND

16. JOINT US-THAI STATEMENT ANNOUNCES FURTHER BIG
REDUCTION IN US FORCES, WITH ABOUT 10,000 SERVICEMEN
AND UNDISCLOSED NUMBER OF PLANES TO BE WITHDRAWN
BY END OF YEAR (REUTER BANGKOK).

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

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INDOCHINA

17. MAINTAINING THAT THERE IS STILL NO VN PEACE 14 MONTHS AFTER SIGNING OF PARIS ACCORDS, AND CITING SEC. SCHLESINGER'S "UNDERSTATED OBSERVATION" IN HIS ANNUAL DEFENSE POSTURE STATEMENT TO CONGRESS THAT CEASE-FIRE "HAS NOT WORKED AS WELL AS WE HAD HOPED," PHINQ SEES NO JUSTIFICATION FOR DOD'S "URGENT REQUESTS TO SPEND EVEN MORE TO STEP UP THE MILITARY STRUGGLE." ARGUES THAT ALTHOUGH BOTH SIDES SHARE BLAME FOR FAILING TO IMPLEMENT VN PEACE STRUCTURE, "'OUR SIDE' CAN HAVE LITTLE INCENTIVE FOR COMING TO PEACE IF IT CAN COUNT ON AMERICA'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO WAR." INSISTS THAT WHILE US CANNOT AND WILL NOT "'WALK AWAY' FROM" DESTRUCTION IT HAS WROUGHT, "IT MUST NOT ADD TO IT" AND CONGRESS CAN BEGIN BY WITHHOLDING FUNDS FOR ANY PURPOSE EXCEPT TO IMPLEMENT PARIS AGREEMENT.

KOREA

18. LAT'S JAMESON, IN SEOUL, FINDS SK-NK HOSTILITY AND PROPAGANDA HAVE RETURNED AND TENSIONS HAVE RISEN -- IF NOT YET TO FEVER PITCH -- AT LEAST TO HIGHEST POINT SINCE 1968-69 PERIOD. SAYS NK FM HO DAM'S MONDAY CALL FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH US -- EXCLUDING ROKG -- TO REVISE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT INTO PEACE TREATY "APPEARED TO WIPE OUT" 1972 AGREEMENT WITH SEOUL THAT KOREAS WOULD SEEK O ACHIEVE REUNIFICATION BY THEIR OWN INDEPENDENT EFFORTS WITHOUT EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE. ALTHOUGH SOME OF SK'S PROFESSED OUTRIGHT ALARM OVER NEW TENSIONS WITH NORTH IS "UNDOUBTEDLY" BEING USED TO JUSTIFY IMPOSITION OF PARK'S AUTHORITARIAN RULE AT HOME, AMERICAN OFFICIALS SHARE AT LAST "SENSE OF MOUNTING TENSION WITH THEIR ALLIES. 'WITH TENSIONS THIS HIGH, IT'S VERY EASY TO HAVE MILITARY INCIDENTS,' ONE OF THEM SAID FOR ATTRIBUTION." CITES PYONGYANG'S MENACING FIVE SMALL ISLANDS OFF WEST COAST AS ONE SOURCE OF TENSIONS, AND

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FEELS SHOULD NK CUT THEM OFF OR SEIZE THEM OUTRIGHT, "CHANCES OF MAJOR FIGHTING APPEAR STRONG" AND US "WOULD THEN COME INTO THE PICTURE DIRECTLY"; REPORTS ONE US MILITARY OFFICIAL SAYING DANGER

IS REAL BECAUSE NK NOW HAS MILITARY MIGHT TO PULL OFF ISLANDS' SEIZURE. ADDING TO ISLANDS' POTENTIALLY BECOMING FOCAL POINT FOR CONFLICT, IS "FACT THAT THE ONLY LEGAL STATUS THEY HAVE" WAS GAINED IN 1953 ARMISTICE AGREEMENT ASSIGNING THEIR CONTROL TO UN FORCES, AND UN VOTE TO ABOLISH UNC COULD LEAVE SOUTH WITHOUT LEGAL CLAIM TO ISLANDS. DURING PAST YEAR NORTH HAS RECEIVED AT LEAST FIVE SUBS, 18 MISSILECARRYING VESSELS AND UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF TORPEDO BOATS AND DESTROYERS FROM USSR, ACCORDING ROKG JCS CHAIRMAN HAN. NK AIR FORCE BUILDUP ALSO HAS ALARMED SOUTH "AND AT LEAST ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF US MILITARY OFFICIALS." THEIR NUMBERS OF MODERN MIG 19 AND MIG 21 JETS IN OPERATION CONSTITUTE ABOUT THIRD OF THEIR TOTAL PLANES, HAN SAID, AND THEY HAVE ABOUT THREE SQUADRONS OF SOVIET IL 20-A BOMBERS. OVERALL, NORTH BELIEVED TO HAVE 2-1 SUPERIORITY OVER SOUTH, EVEN WITH US AIR FORCES IN SK THROWN IN. KIM IL SUNG ALSO HAS UPSET UNEASY AIR PICTURE BY BUILDING HOST OF NEW AIR BASES, MOST NORTH OF DMZ, THUS GIVING NK AIR FORCE LONGER RANGE OF POTENTIAL OPERATION OVER SOUTH AND VIRTUALLY WIPING OUT CHANCE OF ANY WARNING IN CASE OF ATTACK. JAMESON OBSERVES THAT FIVE-YEAR 1.5 BILLION DOLS ROKG ARMED FORCES MODERNIZATION PROGRAM US "PROMISED TO COMPLETE" BY JUNE, 1975 "HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN TOP PRIORITY BY CONGRESS." WHATEVER REASONS FOR NEW TENSIONS, ONE "TOP AMERICAN" TOLD JAMESON NO INDICATION EXISTS THAT NORTH IS PREPARING FOR ATTACK BUT IS "TESTING" PARK'S STRENGTH VERSUS POSSIBLE STUDENT UPRISINGS -- BUT OFFICIAL ADMITTED HIS VIEW "WAS BASED ON THEORY, NOT INTELLIGENCE REPORTS" (MAR. 28).

19. IN SEOUL, NYT'S HALLORAN REPORTS THAT STUDENTS UNCLASSIFIED

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STARTING NEW SEMESTER AT SK'S LEADING UNIVERSITIES ARE IN MILITANT MOOD OF RESENTMENT AGAINST PARK THAT HAS TURNED THEIR SCHOOLS INTO TINDERBOXES NEEDING ONLY SPARK TO SET THEM AFLAME; BUT UNCLEAR WHEN, HOW, FROM WHOM -- OR EVEN IF -- THAT WILL OCCUR. IN RANDOM SAMPLING OF STUDENTS, NONE PRAISED OR DEFENDED PARK; ALL SAID THEY WANTED HIM OUT OF OFFICE AND WOULD NOT BE SATISFIED WITH ANYTHING ELSE, SUCH AS LESS OPPRESSIVE POLICIES. MANY

ARE QUICK TO ADD, WITHOUT BEING ASKED, THAT THEY HAD NO SYMPATHY FOR NK. STUDENTS' GRIEVANCES COME DOWN ESSENTIALLY TO CONDEMNATION OF PARK'S DESPOTIC RULE; BUT THEY ARE UNCLEAR ABOUT WHO

THEY WANT TO REPLACE PARK IF HE IS OUSTED, KISSINGER

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